



# Naval Postgraduate School's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Acquisition Research Symposium

## Panel Discussion

### *Developing and Maintaining Critical Skills in the Acquisition Workforce*

**Ms. René Thomas-Rizzo**

**Director, OUSD (AT&L) Human Capital Initiatives**

May 13, 2015

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

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# Panel #9 Members

**Theme: Developing and Maintaining Critical Skills in the Acquisition Workforce**

**Chair:** Rene' Thomas-Rizzo, Director Human Capital Initiatives, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology & Logistics)

- **Improving Acquisition through Innovation in Workforce Incentives**  
Mr. Venkat Rao, Defense Acquisition University
- **The Department of the Navy Systems Engineering Career Competency Model**  
Clifford Whitcomb, PhD, Naval Postgraduate School
- **Discussant:** Mr. Craig A. Spisak, Army



# ***Mr. Venkat Rao***

- Serves as Professor of Acquisition Management and currently teaches Acquisition and Program Management courses for the Defense Acquisition University (DAU)
- Part of the faculty of the Midwest Region responsible for providing professional education and training to approximately 30,000 defense department personnel in the twelve states within the Midwest
- Site lead for the DAU-Midwest Sterling Heights office
- Broad program management and product development experience in the technology industry spanning 30 years



# ***Clifford Whitcomb, PhD***

- Professor and Chair of the Systems Engineering Department at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California.
- Previously the Northrop Grumman Ship Systems Endowed Chair in Shipbuilding and Engineering in the department of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering at the University of New Orleans.
- Senior lecturer in the System Design and Management (SDM) program and an Associate Professor in the Ocean Engineering Department, at MIT.
- Earned his bachelors degree in engineering from the University of Washington.
- Masters degrees in both Naval Engineering and Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from MIT.
- PhD in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Maryland.



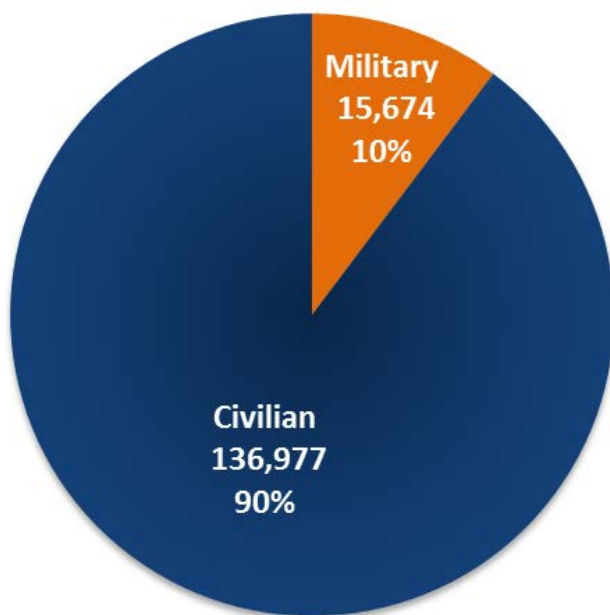
# ***Mr. Craig A. Spisak***

- **Served as Director of the U.S. Army's Acquisition Support Center (USAASC) since June 2005.**
  - Responsible for providing oversight of the Army Acquisition Corps (AAC) and the Acquisition Workforce.
- **Attended Senior Service College at the National Defense University (NDU). He has held various positions serving the U.S. Army for over 26 years.**
- **Graduated with honors from The George Washington University with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering.**
- **Holds M.S. degrees in Information Science and Systems Management from the University of Southern California and National Resource Strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF) at NDU.**

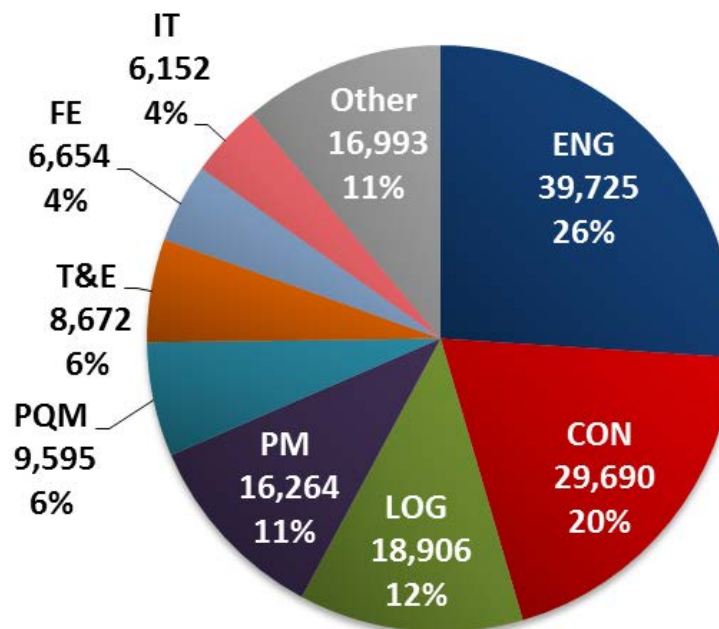


# Department of Defense Acquisition Workforce

## OVERALL



## ACQUISITION CAREER FIELD



**AWF Total = 152,651**

***A HIGHLY  
PROFESSIONAL AND QUALIFIED WORKFORCE***



# *Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA)*

- In 1990, Congress adopted the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act:
  - Created the legal foundation for the central management, planning, and development of today's acquisition workforce (AWF)
  - Outlined general authorities and responsibilities of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology & Logistics
  - Established functional career fields/paths
  - Established career field certification requirements
  - Designed three certification levels – based on education, experience, and training







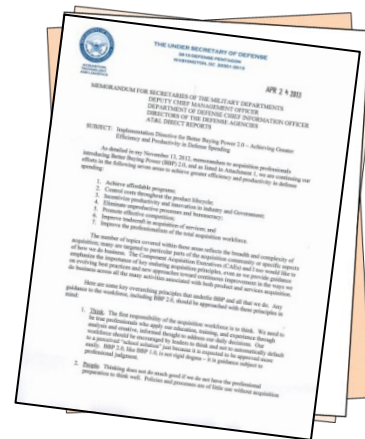
# Better Buying Power Workforce Initiatives

## BBP 2.0

### *Establishing Higher Standards for Key Leaders*

- Key Leadership Position (KLP) Memo Implementation
- Implemented KLP qualification boards
- Strategic Communication and Recognition
- Acquisition Workforce Qualifications Initiative (AWQI)

2.0

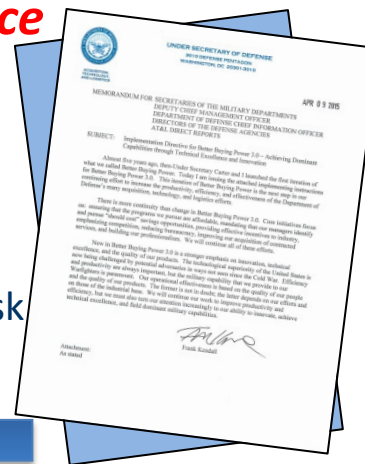


## BBP 3.0

### *Achieving Dominant Capabilities through Technical Excellence and Innovation*

- Technical Workforce Focus
  - Strengthen organic engineering capabilities
  - Ensure the DOD leadership for development programs is technically qualified to manage R&D activities
  - Improve our leaders' abilities to understand and mitigate technical risk
  - Increase DOD support for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education

3.0





# *Today's Discussion*

- Warfighting systems are becoming more and more complex
- DoD must recruit, hire and retain a technically competent acquisition workforce to manage warfighting system procurements
- Recognition of AWF Employee Excellence is fundamental to attracting and retaining top performers
  - What recognition methods are the most successful in attracting and retaining the top performers?
  - How do we measure good performance?
- Systems Engineering is an essential skill in the DoD AWF and must be defined by consistent and correct competency requirements
  - How do we identify on-board Systems Engineers?
  - Do we need a Systems Engineers' competency model?



*Back up*



## *Improving Acquisition through Innovation in Workforce Incentives*

- **Problem:** The acquisition system has delivered superior weapon systems with leading edge capabilities, providing a military advantage, but has a less-than-impressive track record for cost-effectiveness and on-schedule performance.
  - This paper proposes a model for altering the compensation structure of the acquisition workforce, tying it to the cost, performance, and schedule achievement of the programs to which the workforce is assigned.
  - The underlying premise is that introducing an economic incentive and thereby a sense of ownership in acquisition outcomes to the workforce is critical to achieving efficiencies.



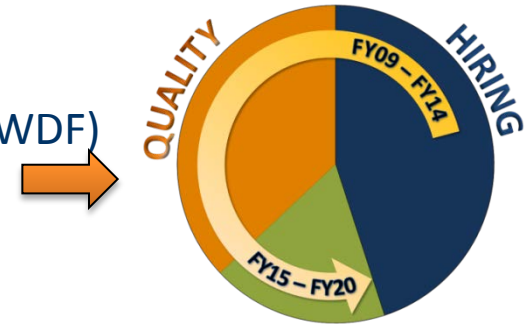
# *The Department of the Navy Systems Engineering Career Competency Model*

- **Problem:** There is currently no professional engineering occupational code (08XX) for systems engineers.
  - The systems engineering competency career model (SECCM) is a multi-year project funded by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (DASN) for Research Development Test and Evaluation (RDT&E).
  - Competency is defined as “an observable, measurable pattern of skills, knowledge, abilities, behaviors and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform work roles or occupational functions successfully” (Office of Personnel Management (OPM)).
  - Competency modeling is defined as the activity of determining the specific competencies that are characteristic of high performance and success in a given job.



# AWF Strategy & Goals

- **Responsibly sustain a highly professional and qualified workforce**
  - Address workforce trends
- **Strategic path ahead**
  - AWF Incentives
  - Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund (DAWDF)
- **Professionalize and Develop (BBP)**
- **Governance Structure**
  - Workforce Management Group (WMG)
  - Senior Steering Board (SSB)
  - Functional Integrated Product Teams (FIPTs)
  - Services/Components
- **Communications plan and better branding**
- **Hiring authorities**
  - How can we keep the workforce we have?
  - Direct authority to recruit from college campuses









# AWF Strategy

